



## Traffic Safety News and Facts for Employers October 9, 2006

### NETS Feature

#### **Drive Safely Work Week Campaign Promotes 10 Steps for Responsible Driving Driver Inattention, the Leading Factor in Crashes Makes Driving Risky Business for Employers**

Baltimore, MD – With 91 percent of employees commuting to and from work and 18 percent of all motor vehicle trips being work-related, employers have an opportunity to make a difference on our nation's roadways by promoting safe driving practices to their employees. Most of the 6,159,000 police-reported motor vehicle crashes that occurred last year were preventable. Many of these incidents involved employees driving for work and even more involved employees who were driving to and from work. More... [http://www.trafficsafety.org/newsletter/100106\\_responsiblefeat1.asp](http://www.trafficsafety.org/newsletter/100106_responsiblefeat1.asp)

### **Latest Traffic Safety News**

#### **NJ To Add Pedestrian Safety Rules To Written Driving Test**

Transportation officials in NJ will incorporate the rules into the state's written driving test as part of a \$74 million pedestrian safety program, Governor Corzine announced last week. The driving test currently asks 50 questions that are drawn from a pool of 200. Currently, the Motor Vehicle Commission is updating its driver's manual to include little-known pedestrian safety rules that could appear on the test. The program will encourage motorists to operate more safely in a state where the pedestrian fatality rate is twice the national average. Twenty-one percent of the state's traffic fatalities, on average, are pedestrian-related.

#### **AAA Foundation Report On Safety Impact of Pavement Edge Drop-Offs**

Pavement edge drop-off related crashes are substantially more likely than other crashes on similar roadways to result in serious injuries, and are more than twice as likely to be fatal, according to a recent study sponsored by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. Characterized by a shoulder that is lower than the edge of the paved road surface, pavement edge drop-off can be caused by pavement breaking, erosion and wear of unpaved shoulders, inadequate maintenance, or resurfacing projects that neglect to keep shoulders level with the paved road surface. To promote safe driving when encountering a drop-off, the Foundation developed "Over the Edge and Back: What to do if you drop off the pavement edge," a brochure that explains what drivers should do, and what they should avoid doing, if they drive off the road. The report "Safety Impacts of Pavement Edge Drop-offs," and drop-off brochure are available on-line at [www.aaafoundation.org](http://www.aaafoundation.org)

#### **Truckload Carriers Join With Public Safety Group To Petition Speed Governors**

Schneider National along with other truckload carriers (including JB Hunt Transport, CR England, Covenant Transport, and Dart Transit 8) have joined forces with Road Safe America, a public safety group to petition the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. They want mandated electronic speed governors set at max 68 mph on heavy commercial trucks. The American Trucking Association supports their petition. For further information, visit <http://www.roadsafeamerica.org/>



### Study: Nearly 60% of Workers Experience Road Rage During Office Commute

Fifty-nine percent of workers surveyed by CareerBuilder.com admit to experiencing road rage while traveling to and from work. One in 10 report they usually or always experience road rage during their commute. The survey, completed in June 2006, included more than 2,200 workers nationwide. Nearly 85 percent of workers say their primary means of traveling to and from work is driving. Thirty percent of workers with commutes of less than five minutes say they experience road rage on occasion. The same goes for 42 percent of workers with commutes of less than 10 minutes. Women were slightly more apt to feel road rage than men. Sixty percent of women reported road rage compared to 57 percent of men.

### Contrasting Perceptual, Attitudinal And Dispositional Approaches To Accident Involvement In The Workplace

Three individual-based approaches to accident involvement in the workplace, perceptual, attitudinal and dispositional, were evaluated using meta-analytic techniques. The study showed that whilst none of the approaches offered evidence of a strong relationship with work accidents, employees' safety perceptions emerged as having greater predictive validity than attitudes towards safety, but that one aspect of personality (agreeableness) had greater predictive validity than either safety perceptions or safety attitudes. The study also showed that there is the possibility that safety perceptions are much more predictive in some occupational settings compared to others. Implications of the results for further research are discussed.

Clarke S. Safety Sci 2006; 44(6): 537-550.

### Shift Work, Sleepiness And Long Distance Driving

A structured interview was used to collect data from 1579 passenger vehicle drivers over a 10-week period. Approximately 11% of these drivers were shift workers (SW) who had completed night shift and the balance were non-shift workers (NSW). The mean one-way driving distance was 211 km (SD = 84) and 213 km (SD = 162) for SW and NSW respectively. The majority of SW (76%) did not plan to take a driving break and some intended driving up to 600 km. SW reported taking approximately 6.5 h of sleep the day before the drive compared to NSW who had a full nights sleep. Mean sleepiness ratings based on the Karolinska Sleepiness Scale (KSS) suggested SW were significantly more sleepy (M = 4.64) than NSW (M = 2.98). Approximately 19% of SW were classified with severe sleepiness (KSS [greater-or-equal, slanted] 7) compared to 1% of NSW and this suggested SW had a greater incidence of safety relevant sleepiness. Severe sleepiness has been linked to driving impairments and is therefore, of concern for the safety of the individual and the wider community.

Di Milia L. Transp Res F Traffic Psychol Behav 2006; 9(4): 278-285

### Text Messaging While Driving is Growing Diversion

About 51% of mobile phone customers use services that include text messaging, sending digital pictures and downloading ring tones. Laws that bar drivers from talking on cell phones do not cover the fastest-growing diversion, text messaging, used by the connected professionals who are attached to their BlackBerry handhelds. Punching in short text messages on a cell phone keypad can be far more distracting and is much harder for authorities to catch. More than a third of teen drivers consider sending text messages the most distracting thing they do while driving, according to a recent study by Liberty Mutual Insurance and Students Against Destructive Decisions, which campaigns against drunken driving. That's ahead of having friends in the car and talking on the phone. Yet text driving barely appears as a blip on most research.

Source: Plain Dealer Reporter



### **Commuting in America III Published by TRB**

The third edition of *Commuting in America* will be published by TRB this fall. The report prepared by Alan E. Pisarski is one of the most comprehensive documents of its kind. Based on the latest census information available, it contains 155 figures and 79 tables that tell the story of America's commuting trends and patterns over the last ten years. This publication will be a valuable reference for the transportation community—practitioners, researchers, and decision makers—who wish to understand how individual behavior and public policies, have affected, and will continue to affect, commuting patterns. Advanced orders for *Commuting in America III* are now being taken, with delivery of the publication expected by the end of October. For further information, visit <http://www.trb.org/news>

### **Task Force Calls for New Screening & Treatment Guidelines for Truckers with Sleep Apnea**

A joint task force of representatives of the American College of Chest Physicians (ACCP), the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) and the National Sleep Foundation recently unveiled new recommendations for the screening and management of obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) among commercial motor vehicle operators. The current guidelines have been in use since 1991. New recommendations would be based on severity of OSA with the use of an expanded screening process. Mild to severe OSA affects more than one-third of commercial drivers.

### **News from the USDOT**

#### **Judge Hands Tire Safety Issue Over to NHTSA**

A U.S. district judge recently ordered the National Highway and Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) to make the decision as to whether or not tire safety data should be released to the public. Safety advocates are pushing NHTSA to collect more data related to tire safety history. They have asked the agency to require tire makers to submit evidence of problems with tires more than five years old. Tire makers have lobbied NHTSA to keep that information secret, anticipating a slew of lawsuits and customer complaints. In 2002, NHTSA proposed a requirement that tire makers release claim and warranty information under the presumption that it would be non-confidential in cases causing death or injury. However, the rule was never finalized due to the possibility of "competitive harm" to tire makers. The data has not yet been made public. Source: Limo Talk National Newswire

#### **TRAFFIC SAFETY FACTS: 2005 OVERVIEW**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA) has released a traffic safety overview fact sheet that contains statistics on motor vehicle fatalities based on data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System. Other fact sheets available from the NCSA cover alcohol, bicyclists and other cyclists, children, large trucks, motorcycles, occupant protection, older population, pedestrians, school transportation-related crashes, speeding, state alcohol estimates, state traffic data, and young drivers. The fact sheets are available on NCSA's website at [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)

#### **Senate Confirms Mary Peters AS U.S. Secretary of Transportation**

The United States Senate has confirmed President George W. Bush's nomination of Mary Peters as Secretary of Transportation. During her tenure as administrator of the U.S. Federal Highway Administration from 2001 to 2005, Peters was credited with improving safety in highway work zones; and worked to streamline the decision-making process for major transportation projects. Peters was director of the Arizona Department of Transportation prior to serving as FHWA Administrator. She



received the 2004 National Woman of the Year Award from the Women's Transportation Seminar, a national organization of transportation professionals.

### **Large-Truck Crash Causation Study Released**

The U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Center for Statistics and Analysis has released a report from data collected in the Large-Truck Crash Causation Study (LTCCS). While the LTCCS collected data on approximately 1,000 variables, the tables presented in the report comprise only a sample of these variables, providing information on crashes that occurred under certain characteristics, the vehicles involved in certain types of crashes, and the drivers that were involved in certain crash scenarios. To download the study, visit <http://ai.volpe.dot.gov/ltccs/default.asp>

### **NHTSA Requires Electronic Stability Control (ESC) by 2012**

NHTSA will require ESC on all vehicles sold in US by the 2012 model year. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, ESC can reduce the chance of a rollover by 80% and NHTSA estimates that ESC can save 5,300-10,300 lives annually and prevent up to 252,000 injuries. Safety advocates call ESC "breakthrough technology" but caution against over-optimism. About 40% of new vehicles now have ESC and GM, Ford and Toyota are all expected to beat the deadline by several years. It is estimated that the rule will cost the industry \$985,000,000. For further information, <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/>

### **FHWA Releases Human Factors Literature Review**

The U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has released a report that summarizes the accumulated human factors knowledge and practices that are relevant to human cognition, perception, and behavior in the areas of intersections, speed management, pedestrians and bicyclists, and visibility of traffic control devices and materials. The report is designed to be used by both human factors and nonhuman factors participants in addressing general safety areas, including driver behavior at intersections, and in developing tools and procedures for intersection design.

### **Work-Life**

#### **Walk to School in October**

Each October, millions of children, parents, teachers and community leaders across the globe walk to school to celebrate International Walk to School Day. Now, communities can choose to celebrate for a day, a week, once a week or the entire month with the first-ever International Walk to School Month. In the USA, the focus will remain on Walk to School Day with support for communities that choose to celebrate for the length of time and dates that fit their interests and resources. Walk to School activities often become a catalyst for on-going efforts to increase safe walking and bicycling all of the time. Register to participate at <http://www.walktoschool.org/register/index.cfm> and visit <http://www.walktoschool.org/eventideas/index.cfm> for event materials.

### **Many Teens Drink, Use Drugs and Drive; Parents Can Be Effective Deterrents**

The annual Teens Today survey sponsored by Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) and the Liberty Mutual Insurance Company found that 19 percent of teens drive under the influence of alcohol, 15 percent drive after using. The report also found that teens whose parents set high expectations and impose serious consequences are less likely to drive while impaired. And through this study, the type of parental involvement that works is clear -- parents need to know the laws and





teen-driving rules of their state, set clear expectations with their teens about what safe driving is, and establish and enforce those consequences should those laws be broken or expectations not be met. Good parenting also can cut down on car crashes, speeding, and distracted driving among teens, the study found. Suggested family rules for teen drivers include no friends in the car without an adult; no driving after 10 p.m.; no use of alcohol or other drugs; no distractions while driving, including eating, changing CDs, handling iPods and putting on makeup; and no cell phone use, including text messaging. For further information, visit [www.libertymutual.com](http://www.libertymutual.com)

### **Young Drivers: The Road to Safety**

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and the European Conference of Ministers of Transport have released a report that explores elements of young driver risk, the factors behind it, and countermeasures that address it. The report also examines policies designed to assist governments and other actors in taking steps to reduce young driver risk and the associated human and economic costs. For further information, visit [www.cemt.org/online/council/2006/CM200618e.pdf](http://www.cemt.org/online/council/2006/CM200618e.pdf)

### **International Traffic Safety News**

#### **Tailgaters Major Driver Safety Issue In UK**

According to research carried out by the RAC Foundation, Institute of Advanced Motorists, the Freight Transport Association and BSM Driving Schools, tailgating turns 26% of motorists into "accidents waiting to happen." The study identified two main categories of tailgaters: the first is the absent-minded motorist who are blindly following the vehicle in front, often traveling too close without realizing and the second type of tailgater is the motorist who is trying to pass the car in front of them. The survey covered more than 22,000 motorists and highlighted tailgating as the number one driver error. Research by the Highways Agency found that tailgating contributed to 29% of all injury accidents on the UK's motorways. Part of the agency's Close Following project will be trials of a new camera that can spot motorists traveling too close to the car in front. The data collected will be analyzed by the Transport Research Laboratory to see if the technology works effectively. If it does, motorists could then start to see the cameras linked to Variable Message Signal (VMS) boards, warning them to increase the gap between themselves and the car in front.

Source: FleetNewsNet

#### **Preliminary 2005 Road Safety Data in Europe**

The European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) has released preliminary data on road safety in Europe for 2005. According to an ECMT press release, Western European countries continue to improve their road safety scores. In addition, the number of road fatalities decreased in Central and Eastern Europe in 2005. For the second consecutive year, road fatalities also seem to be decreasing in countries of the community of independent states.